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News

Camp Nimitz Plans Remain Controversial

By **Melanie Nickel**
The Beacon

The Base Closure Committee for the Naval Training Center (NTC) in Point Loma has reached agreement on how to use most portions of the base, according to urban design coordinator Mike Stepner. Two areas of disagreement remain, symbolized by blank areas on the committee's tentative reuse map. They are a

35-acre parcel along Rosecrans Street, adjacent to the planned Navy housing complex, and the area known as Camp Nimitz, between the boat channel and the airport.

The 35-acre parcel has been identified as a possible housing site, although many Peninsula civic organizations oppose additional housing on the base, beyond the 500 units of Navy housing already agreed to. A coal-

ition of social service agencies touched off a storm of protest last June, when they proposed using the area for "transitional housing" for formerly homeless people.

"We have not locked into a transitional housing use for that site," Stepner told the Jan. 30 town meeting sponsored by the Point Loma Association. The legal situation has changed since that proposal was made, he explained. Homeless housing is no longer the

first priority for closing military bases. Cities are merely required to address the needs of the homeless in some way, which may be on- or off-site.

Commenting privately after the meeting, Stepner reported that "the transitional housing proposal was turned down" by the base closure committee. Although no formal vote rejecting the proposal was taken, the homeless providers "were given to understand that this proposal was not reasonable in the scheme of things," he said. They were told to come back with another proposal, which is expected within the next few weeks. The closure committee is leaning toward "market rate" (private) housing on that site, he indicated.

Regarding a proposed move of San Diego Unified School District offices to Building 94 at NTC, Stepner said the district has withdrawn its application for that building, although "there is still room for discussion."

There have been several proposals for the Camp Nimitz area. The Port of San Diego would like to annex it to Lindbergh Field. Police and fire fighting officials want to use existing training facilities there to create a "regional safety academy."

If the Port obtained the Camp Nimitz area, they could add another six to ten airplane gates to the planned new concourse at the western end of the airport, said Port Chief Engineer Grady Dutton. The rest of the area would be used for overnight parking for planes. "We look at every opportunity we can to acquire land adjacent to the airport," he noted.

There are nearly-new training facilities at Camp Nimitz which



EX-CHAMP SCORES AGAIN
Champion boxer Archie Moore signs a copy of the new book "The Prizefighter" by Arlene Schulman, Feb. 3 at Bookstar, 3150 Rosecrans Pl.
The Beacon/Michael-Leonard Creditor

Town Meeting Looks At Airport, NTC Plan

By **Melanie Nickel**
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Airport expansion plans and possible uses for the closing Naval Training Center (NTC) were expounded Jan. 30 at a Point Loma town meeting.

Hosted by the Point Loma Association (PLA) and attended by nearly 200 people, the meeting featured presentations by representatives of the Port of San Diego, the San Diego Police Department and the city planning department. The meeting was informational and there was little opportunity for comment by audience members — a situation that will be remedied at the next town meeting, tentatively scheduled for March 6, when "all of us can express our opinions on these issues," PLA President Ray Brody said.

The NTC Reuse Committee has agreed on plans for most portions of the closing base, reported Mike Stepner, who as urban design coordinator for San Diego, oversees the closure process for

the city. He displayed a tentative map showing a city-owned golf course and driving range, office and retail space in the historic buildings of the central core, an educational complex, two new hotels, public swimming pools and gymnasiums, and public park land along the boat channel. He reported that agreement has not yet been reached on two areas: a 35-acre parcel adjacent to the planned Navy housing complex, and the area between the channel and the airport known as Camp Nimitz.

Grady Dutton, chief engineer for the Port of San Diego, outlined the Port's plans for expansion of Lindbergh Field over the next two years. They include:

- A new \$60 million concourse in the West Terminal, adding eight arrival and departure gates and an improved baggage claim area;

- A complete revision of automobile and pedestrian traffic patterns at the airport, costing \$40 million and including pedestrian bridges to remove foot traffic

from the roads in front of the terminals, a new overpass over Harbor Drive to serve the 85 percent of airport traffic that arrives and leaves from the downtown direction, and two new entrances to the airport from Harbor Drive;

- A temporary "commuter terminal" at the old US Air/PSA building, to serve smaller commuter-type airlines;

- A new control tower, more than twice as tall as the existing one, being built by the Federal Aviation Administration;

- A new fuel storage area which will eliminate hundreds of fuel trucks per week from Harbor Drive, shifting them to Pacific Highway.

In addition, the Port will reacquire the Pacific Highway property now occupied by Convair, which will demolish its existing buildings before surrendering its lease, Dutton said.

The car rental area located between Harbor Drive and the bay is temporary, and those operations will eventually be moved back to the airport, he added.

offer the potential for a "world class, state of the art regional public safety academy," said Dave Worden, assistant chief of police for the city of San Diego. The city is already using an indoor shooting range and a fire fighting school there. By teaching fire fighting and police skills to local, state and federal officers as well as private or commercial interests, the academy would be a net money-maker for the city, he added.

A questionnaire distributed at the town meeting asked audience members to choose between these two options for Camp Nimitz. Of 200 survey sheets distributed, 164 were returned that night, reported John Seymour, chairman of the Peninsula Community Planning Board. The results were: 39 respondents preferred the airport expansion plan, 122 voted for the public safety academy and 3 chose neither option. "A result of three-to-one in favor of the public safety academy is pretty overwhelming," Seymour commented.